



Warm Front

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Warm Front by dreamyhoney

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Summary:

Sometimes, when he looks at Richie, Eddie begins to feel something he probably shouldn't.

Warm Front

The thought enters his mind to touch him. It is a brief thought that slips into his head so sharp and silent he means to swat it away like a bug. He watches Richie like he is dreaming; his mind sticky and clouded, focused on the way Richie's cheeks rise up soft to his eyes to make room for his smile.

His belly is burning with something strange and new that coils tight and creeps its way up to his chest. Eddie feels snared like a rabbit for a moment, unable to let his gaze stray from Richie's face. His skin prickles up going tight and taut. He lowers himself further into the water, letting it tickle at his nose.

"Are you pissing yourself or something," Richie asks, and suddenly he is so close that Eddie can feel the heat radiating off of him. His skin is pale and spattered with mosquito bites, picked pink and bleeding. A shiver runs through Eddie's body and he swallows hard.

Words won't come to him, so he retorts by splashing the other boy in the face.

"Yeah," he says, "does it feel warm enough". And then the tension is gone. It as if the moment had never happened.

They are children playing again, and Eddie can forget that strange ache in his stomach.

There are moments, he finds, where Richie comes just a little closer than he can handle. Feeling his hand on his back awakens that feeling again. He is sweating and shivering all at once, like he's been stricken with a fever.

He wonders if it is the same for Richie too. Feeling almost sick and yet, wanting to feel more of it. He hopes he makes Richie shiver too.

They are coming back from Ben's, their bikes lazily dragging beside them as they each sip from their bottles of coke. The air smells heavy even as darkness creeps into the corners of the sky. Richie is cracking some stupid joke, but the fuzziness has settled in Eddie's mind again

and he doesn't hear a word of it.

Richie has this strange sort of grace to the way he carries himself; every little gesture seems so effortless yet intentional. Eddie watches, mesmerized, by the way the boy's dark curls bounce slightly with each step.

"Hey, Eds".

He snaps from his reverie, and stops to face the other boy.

"Can I ask you something"?

He replies, "yeah," but his voice cracks awkwardly. Eddie tightens his hold on the handle of his bike and feels the rubber grip imprint its design into his palm.

Richie's eyes flit around nervously, refusing to meet Eddie's. This hesitance is new for him, and Eddie is a bit worried. He braces for the worst.

"Do you like me? I mean Stan was saying that he thought you did, and- I just wanted to know so,"

Eddie's throat goes tight and he can feel tears pricking at the corners of his eyes.

"Don't say shit like that you dickhead. I'm not gay and it- it isn't funny". He is proud of himself for keeping himself from crying, even just a little.

"Oh, come on! Don't sell me short. You'd know if I was joking, Eds. I'm fucking hilarious".

Richie waits, hoping to draw a laugh from his friend. Nothing.

There is a clatter, as Richie lets his bike fall unattended into the street. He rests his hands on Eddie's shoulders, and his tongue slips out to wet his lips.

"I'm asking because I like you."

Now Eddie can't stop himself from crying. His whole body shakes with the force of it, and his lungs sound worse for wear.

"Jesus, are you okay Eddie? I didn't mean to make you- I mean- Jesus," Richie babbles.

Eddie is trying to rub away the tears with his hand but they just keep coming. He crinkles up his nose, trying to prevent his face from becoming a wet mess.

“I’m gonna be,” he pauses to sniffle, “so fucking mad if you’re joking.”

He balls up his fists like he’s about hit Richie, but they stay slack at his side as he continues to cry. The tears are fat and heavy and they leave little tracks where they spill down Eddie’s cheeks. Richie takes Eddie’s chin in his hands, tilting his head gently to look into his eyes.

“I really, really like you Eddie. I think about kissing you a lot. Like a lot. I don’t think you understand, Eddie. A LOT. Like I popped a boner thinking about you in language arts last week”.

And there’s that laugh he’d been missing.

“You’re so fucking stupid,” he’s sniffing, but he’s giggling too. His lashes tickle at his cheeks.

Richie drags his thumb gently along Eddie’s cheek, brushing away the tears. His gaze falls on Eddie’s parted lips and he feels a pang of tightness in his stomach.

“I’m still thinking about kissing you,” he says, and it sounds a lot more stupid than he’d thought it would.

Kissing scares Eddie a little but he closes his eyes so softly and leans in to press his lips awkwardly against Richie’s.

Despite his claims, Richie is not exactly experienced, but he parts his lips and cups the back of Eddie’s head in his hands. It is a real first kiss, the kind that gives Eddie nervous butterflies.

He feels tingly, and he grabs onto Richie’s shirt to steady himself on now shaking legs.

“Wow,” he says breathily. Richie smiles, the big toothy grin that always makes Eddie feel hot in the face.

“You know Eddie, you’re a much better kisser than your mom”.

Eddie pushes him for that, but he's laughing when he calls him an asshole. He feels safe, although it feels silly to think it; safe and warm and real.

They leave their coke bottles on Richie's porch, and all the way back to Eddie's house they hold hands.

Author's Note:

I care about these boys a lot. This is my first pure ship and I love them dearly. Sorry that this is so short, I'll most likely write more reddie.